

HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION MEETING

Minutes

February 12, 2015

Commission Members Present:

Genevieve Walker-Lightfoot
Ivette Lopez
Frank V. Eastham, Jr.
Rev. Turner
Ilene Kessler
Bianca Chang
Giovanna Guarnieri

Commission Members Absent:

Catherine Hyde
Opel T. Jones, I
Tim Johnson
Sal Hussain

Staff:

Stephanie M. Chapple, Recording Secretary
Mary Campbell, Acting OHR Administrator
Barry Sanders, HRC Legal Counsel

1. CALL TO ORDER

Meeting was called to order at 7:10 pm.

2. PUBLIC FORUM –

3. HRC CASES UPDATE – LEGAL COUNSEL – N/A

4. APPROVE MINUTES

January meeting minutes were approved.

5. Chair's Report – Gen will discuss report during New Business.

6. COMMITTEES/ REPORTS

- *Finance and Fair Lending* – Genevieve – No report.
- *Legislation* – Ivette and Genevieve – No report.
- *Education & Community Outreach* – Frank, Rev. Turner – Frank attended and facilitated a diversity break-out session at the annual White House National Prayer Breakfast. Frank also attended the MLK event at Beth Shalom, and will ask the keynote address speaker - student from Howard High School, to attend an HRC meeting, as well as, speak with high school principals in the county. Bridgeway Church will host a pastor from Ferguson, MO on Sunday, Feb. 15th. The format will provide a more discussion based service, instead of the traditional style. After the pastor speaks, Frank will facilitate some discussion around diversity with the congregation. Rev. Turner suggested having representation from the Commission, as well as a table at the Black History Month Expo at Wilde Lake High School. Frank will spearhead reserving a booth at this annual program. The African American Community Roundtable and the Police Department have formed a partnership to plan and host a community forum, in June, on a Saturday. Rev. Turner will share details at next meeting. The goal of this forum is to inform and educate the department regarding perceptions & concerns in the African American community, (2) educate youth and members of the African American community on what to do when interacting with officers, (3) educate the community on the department's policing initiatives, and (4) educate the community on personnel demographics & their diversity promotion plan to ensure diversity throughout upper level management.
- *Law Enforcement* – Opel & Tim – No report.
- *HRC Awards Program* – Ivette and Bianca – No report
- *Human Trafficking Task Force* – Genevieve – No report.
- *LGBTQ Committee* – Catherine – No report.
- *Housing* – Ivette and Ilene- Ilene thanked Mary and her staff for a wonderful Fair Housing program conducted by OHR for the Howard County Association of Realtors. Ilene is hopeful that Realtors will be required to have more hours of housing and diversity training.
- *Aging & Disability Matters* – Bianca, Genevieve No report.
- *Health Care Access* – Bianca – deadline for registration for healthcare access has been extended to February 15th. Numbers of enrollment have increased in Maryland. Bianca will speak to representatives at the Health Care Department to see if there was an increase with participants within the county.

7. **STUDENT REPORT** – Giovanna and Taylor are working together on a student panel to get all county high schools involved in a “We Matter” campaign, as well as a student “Human Rights Youth Committee,” an essay contest, etc. Other initiatives include a possible YouTube video or app, and plans for a roundtable discussion between students and county officials. More information and details will be shared in March.

8. STAFF REPORT/UPDATES – Mary gave overall numbers of cases under investigation, new cases filed, number of cases closed, and number of cases docketed with the HRC. OHR has an App from Apple which is an inquiry will allow people to send a message to the office if you believe you've been discriminated against. The annual MLK Commission program and the Beth Shalom/MLK event were successful and well-attended. This year's Howard County Housing Fair will be held on April 11th at Wilde Lake High School. OHR will have a booth, as well as a table, and is requesting support from Commissioners to volunteer.

9. NEW BUSINESS – BUDGET - Rev. Turner will spearhead preparing an HRC budget requested by the County Executive. Rev. Turner will speak to vendors, Taylor will call the national office to inquire about conducting possible pro-bono studies, Taylor will provide an RFQ template to Gen and Rev. Turner. A proposed budget will be prepared and submitted to OHR within a week.

10. ANNOUNCEMENTS/UPDATES – MAHRA Human Rights Day in Annapolis will be held on Tuesday, February 17th. If you plan to attend, or for more information, please call Mary or Stephanie. Chinese Lunar New Year celebration will be held at 5 p.m. sponsored by the Chinese School at the George Howard Building on Thursday, February 19th.

II. ADJOURNMENT – Meeting adjourned at 8:08 p.m.